



House of Representatives

State of South Carolina

Todd Rutherford

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Committee:

Judiciary

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Dear Commissioner Clyburn,

Being an elected official and the House Minority Leader, I can appreciate the importance of compromise and working across the aisle to promote the common good. Working with my colleagues to produce the best possible outcome is something hard fought and necessary for progress. For these reasons, it makes sense to me that Chairman Wheeler would present a middle-road approach to regulating broadband. He presents a unique balance of common sense regulations with foresight for implementation and the growth of the Internet.

The importance of an open and accessible Internet is integral to our communities' development and growth. The vast amount of resources provided to us through broadband has become commonplace in our society. Healthcare, job applications, and education are just a few of the numerous benefits we have at our fingertips with access to the Internet. Unfortunately, reclassifying broadband as Title II, a choice preferred by certain groups, would increase barriers to this access and make it more difficult for broadband to adapt and change to our evolving society.

Not only would Title II stunt growth by increasing uncertainty and limiting investment, it would potentially impose burdensome new obligations on Internet services. These obligations often times translate into increased costs for the consumer. Further, Title II will lead to less innovation and decreased investment into our networks. With South Carolina providing some of the most accessible Internet throughout the country, it's hard to justify a more complex and burdensome system that will affect our growth.

Broadband has been a huge economic stronghold for South Carolina. It has helped businesses earn around \$17 billion annually online and that number keeps growing. With increased expansion, our state will be able to continue this revenue growth as well as continue to provide what have become basic benefits of access to the Internet like access to education and the political process. Unfortunately, reclassifying broadband as Title II would greatly threaten this access by hindering investment into our networks.

Success of broadband expansion can, in large part, be traced to a light regulatory touch on our providers. Chairman Wheeler's approach both considers the public interest and ensures continual investment and innovation of our broadband sector. I hope you will work with your fellow commissioners to find common ground instead of limiting the potential an innovative and progressive internet connection can have on our state and our country.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Todd Rutherford", written over a horizontal line.

Representative Todd Rutherford
House Minority Leader